

Serial No. 10/529,403

Atty. Doc. No. 2002P13112WOUS

Amendments To the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any cancelled claims at a later date.

1.-15. (cancelled)

16. (currently amended) A method for providing absence information ~~for in a telecommunication subscriber system having a plurality of subscribers,~~ the method comprising:

creating and acquiring the absence information regarding a first subscriber terminal; ~~at a first terminal assigned to the first subscriber;~~

sending the absence information regarding the first subscriber terminal to a switching node ~~of the telecommunication system~~ and storing the absence information in the switching node; and

sending the absence information regarding the first subscriber terminal to a second subscriber terminal, ~~assigned to a second subscriber,~~ such that the absence information is continuously ~~permanently~~ available at the second terminal, wherein

the "absence text" and "station guarding" service features ~~of the telecommunication system~~ are used when creating and storing the absence information.

17. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, further comprising:

sending a request message to the switching node by the second terminal; and, after receiving the request message,

sending a current absence information regarding the first subscriber terminal to the second terminal by the switching node.

18. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, further comprising:

sending a request message to the switching node by the second terminal; and, after receiving the request message,

sending a current absence information regarding the first subscriber terminal to the second terminal by the switching node at specified time intervals.

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19. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, further comprising:

sending a request message to the switching node by the second terminal; and, after receiving the request message,

sending the absence information regarding the first subscriber terminal to the second terminal by the switching node if the absence information has changed.

20. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the absence information regarding the first subscriber terminal is automatically acquired at the ~~first~~ second terminal.

21. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the absence information regarding the first subscriber terminal is automatically acquired at the ~~first~~ second terminal.

22. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the absence information regarding the first subscriber terminal is automatically acquired at the ~~first~~ second terminal.

23. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the absence information regarding the first subscriber is automatically acquired at the ~~first~~ second terminal.

24. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the absence information which has been sent is displayed ~~on a display of~~ at the second terminal.

25. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the absence information is ~~stored in~~ regularly updated at the second terminal.

26. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein further service features of the telecommunication system are used for creating and storing the absence information.

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27. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein ~~a plurality of first terminals send relevant absence information to the switching node~~ includes storage for, and that a subscriber list from which absence information is sent to includes the corresponding first subscribers can be defined at the second terminal.

28. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the switching node sends the absence information to one second terminal, ~~a plurality of second terminals.~~

29. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the second terminal is an external terminal relative to the first subscriber terminal, having a network connection to the switching node. ~~absence information regarding at least one external subscriber is additionally provided, said external subscriber not being assigned to the telecommunication system, but having an assigned external terminal and being connected to the telecommunication system via a network.~~

30. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the network connection includes is the Internet.

31. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein a first assignment table is used for transforming the absence information regarding the external terminal subscriber from an absence information format of the external terminal into an absence information format of the switching node.

32. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein a second assignment table is used for transforming the absence information from the absence information format of the switching node ~~telecommunication system~~ into the absence information format of the external terminal.

33. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein standard protocols are used for sending the absence information between the first and second terminals. ~~terminals of the telecommunication system and the external terminal.~~

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34. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) is used as a standard protocol for sending the absence information between the terminals. ~~of the telecommunication system and the external terminal.~~

35. (cancelled)